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ABSTRACT

Utilizing research conducted on nostalgia, this paper shows how a phenomenological approach assists in understanding behavior, experience and expression. Moreover, a clearer understanding of them aids one's research with and comprehension of nostalgia. Human action can be studied from the experiential, behavioral and expressive perspectives. These perspectives are as much statements about attitudes toward action as they are about human action itself. Human action is the dialectic behaved-experience, experenced-behavior, and as such, this dialectic possesses a lateral depth. Experience and behavior are maximally visible from the attitudes of the actor and the observer, respectively. Differing attitudes indicate differing approaches toward nostalgia, and these methodological considerations are discussed. From the perspective of experience the world of nostalgia reveals the faces of betrayal and fulfillment. The behavioral perspective shows that behavior lends ground for the figural experience of nostalgia. Behavior situates nostalgia in relation to the norms of the body, history, and the situation of action. Expression unfolds the distance of the actor from these norms and the actors' intentionality. Methodologically, expression concerns the intentional meanings of nostalgia; behavior gives the normative conditions of nostalgia; and experience reveals the structural meanings of the world of nostalgia. (Author)

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BEHAVIOR, EXPERIENCE AND EXPRESSION:

SOME RESEARCH CONSIDERATIONS

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I. Introduction:

The praxis of psychology is immeasurably aided by phenomenology while phenomenology is invariably enriched by the content of psychology. The relationship is most certainly not one way, and Merleau-Ponty's reflections on and dialogue with the traditions of psychoanalysis (1970) and developmental psychology (1973), as well as his treatment of the themes of perception (1962), and language (1973) are primary examples of this reciprocal influence. Moreover, numerous other studies bear witness to the fruitful results of this encounter. Giorgi's phenomenological psychological studies on learning (1967), W. Fischer's on anxiety (1970), C. Fischer's on psychological testing (1970), and the numerous works of F. J. J. Buytendijk (1962, 1968), and Erwin Straus (1963, 1966, 1970) are only a small number of additional examples. Situating myself within this tradition, I

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wish to indicate in this paper how phenomenological thought does aid the praxis of psychology, particularly by enlightening the theoretical foundations of this praxis. Phenomenology not only deepens our understanding of particular psychological phenomena, it also, and perhaps more importantly, clarifies what the meaning of a psychological phenomena is and thus begins to lay the groundwork for a truly human psychology.

The themes of behavior, experience and expression seem foundational to this task of clarification. Utilizing the research which I have been conducting on nostalgia, I intend to show how a phenomenological approach understands these terms. Conversly I hope that I will also show how a clearer understanding of these terms aids one's research with and comprehension of this topic.

II. The Phenomenon of Nostalgia:

A. The world of a psychological phenomenon: Experience

I began my research on the phenomenon of nostalgia already with an undeveloped sense of something of its meaning. I "knew" for example that it was often lived in a painful and bitter-sweet way, and that quite often I would and could go out of my way to avoid it. Of course, it was true that at times this phenomenon did overtake me and that I found myself within

its grasp. Nevertheless I did seem to possess a kind of knowledge about the haunts or the locations of nostalgia, as well as something about its rhythm which suggested to me, albeit in a dim way, where and when nostalgia could be found, and thus also how it could be avoided.

Now I mention this fact because it was not without its significance in the conduct of my research, as indeed I think it is true for all research with human phenomena. What the researcher investigates he has already lived, and these lived meanings can often be fertile hints or suggestions for one's initial orientation toward the phenomenon. In my own case, for example, these hints immediately came to the forefront in response to an article by Hart (1973), and also helped me to formulate a plan of investigation.

In his article entitled "Toward a phenomenology of nostalgia," Hart states that "...a nostalgic past...cannot be recalled at will (1973, p. 397)." This however did not seem to fit with my own lived awareness of the phenomenon. Of course I was not insisting to myself that it could be recalled at will, but only that the fact that it could at times be avoided suggested that it was more than a happenstance occurence. Moreover, when Hart, in elaborating his position, further stated that "I can exhort you to try to recall a nostalgic experience but it proves ill-advised to exhort you to be nostalgic (Ibid)," I suspected

that this distinction between "recalling" and "being" (nostalgic) was ill-founded. In short, each of these initial disquietudes set the stage for my first research encounter with the phenomenon.

Reflecting on the meaning of my ability to avoid nostalgia, I discovered that my uneasiness with Hart's first formulation concerned his presumption that nostalgia, as a psychological phenomenon, was not situated. In other words, even adopting a phenomenological stance, Hart made the common enough mistake of treating the psychic as interior. Despite, therefore, his use of Proust (1970) whose work magnificently indicates the world of nostalgia and thus suggests that nostalgia is a world, Hart in fact approached nostalgia in a very traditional, psychological way as an experience, with experience moreover understood as only inside and invisible.[1] My avoidance of the phenomenon however suggested just the opposite. It suggested that nostalgia

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[1]As this article develops it will become clear that one major difference between my position and Hart's concerns the visibility of experience. Now this difference can also be expressed in terms of the difference between an eidetic and hermeneutic phenomenology. Hart adopts the former position. He says: "The task, then, is an eidetic of nostalgia with Husserlian distinctions serving as our guide (1973, p. 397)." An eidetic phenomenology however still retains the prejudices of a psychologism, noteworthy among which are the retention of the traditional psychological view of experience as an inner, invisible psychic region, the priority of the study of the structures of conscious life, and the belief that these structures are so to speak on this side of the world. In contrast a hermeneutical phenomenology insists on, among other things, the situatedness of human experience, its visibility and the task of reading. The structures of experience here are not structures

is a world, or a setting, or a situation, and that to have once lived it is to already have a pre-understanding of its meaning as a setting. Indeed I discovered that my avoidance of the phenomenon of nostalgia was in fact an avoidance of its "locales", and that, in a sense to be developed later, the phenomenon was its setting. These locales of course were at first nothing more than the whisper of nostalgia's meaning, presenting no more than something of its tone, its shading, its texture, its color or its mood. But these whispers were enough not only to avoid at times the experience of nostalgia, but also and more importantly they were enough to imply first that the experience of nostalgia, like all psychological experience, is visible, and second that this visibility was a clue to its meaning and hence the suggestion of a method. Indeed since my method was in fact initially guided by this understanding of experience's visibility, some remarks about this theme are now in order.

(1) The visibility of the experience world

The visibility of human experience is of course not understandable from within a traditional psychological

of consciousness but structures for consciousness in the world. The image of a reader and text is a prototypical example. Moreover if an eidetic phenomenology has its origins in the early work of Husserl, a hermeneutic phenomenology has its origins in the work of Merleau-Ponty.

perspective which accords visibility only to behavior. In fact adopting a spatial metaphor, traditional psychology understands behavior as outside and experience as inside, and thus understands each as a regional domain with a quasi-independent reality. Psychology then becomes the study of behavior and psychological phenomena come to be identified with what is visible in this most obvious way.

What is most obvious in this way, however, is in fact really obscure, since the definition of behavior as the only visible and experience as only invisible rests on the unwarranted assumption of each term's real, in the traditional sense of empirical, existence. Behavior however is not real, nor is experience, in the empirical sense of a something which exists independently of a perspective. On the contrary behavior "and" experience are perspectives about the meaning of human action, and "each" represents not merely a reality which is there to be seen but also a way or a stance of seeing. Behavior "and" experience then are as much statements about an <u>attitude</u> toward human action as they are about human action itself. They refer in other words not only to <u>what</u> human action is but just as importantly to <u>how</u> it is <u>what</u> it is. What is most obvious then in fact rests on a forgetfulness of this attitude, or if one prefers on a forgetfulness that human action is always given from within and in relation to a particular perspective or point of

view. Human action then is to be considered in relation to its perspective and in terms of the attitude which animates each perspective. Adopting the perspective of the observer, human action reveals itself as behavior. Moreover as such this behavior is visible. On the other hand this same action which reveals itself to the observer as visible behavior is from the point of view of the actor an experience which is indeed also visible to him. How the actor's experience is visible to himself, and even the fact that it <u>is</u> visible, is, I agree, usually unnoticed. But the fact remains that it is visible for the actor in the behavior of the other as behaved by him. The other then reflects my experience of my own behavior back to me in his behavior as behaved by him, and vice versa. To behave in the presence of the other then is to discover the visibility of one's own experience in the "face" of that other. My experience of being angry for example is visible in the other's face of fear. And indeed nothing is changed in all this if and when one is dealing with a thing, for here too the face of the world, its "behavior" if one permits, reflects my experience. Thus, for example, if while I am standing on a hilltop, admiring the sunset, I say, "The sun is magnificient," then what I have displayed in this brief utterance is something like my own experience of humility in the face of this grand spectacle. In the magnificent radiance of the sun's "behavior" I find my experience of humility,

just as my experience of humility is reflected in, and carried by, the sun's majesty.

Stated as a principle, therefore, I believe that it is phenomenologically accurate to say that my experience is your behavior as behaved by you, while my behavior is your experience as behaved by me.[2] What is behavior from one point of view then is experience from another point of view and vice versa.

This visibility of behavior "and" experience is however only half the story, for behavior "and" experience are also invisible. Taking the actor's point of view, my experience is visible for me in your behavior as behaved by you, while my own behavior is invisible. And from the observer's point of view it is just the opposite: my experience is invisible, while my behavior is visible. Of course the same is true for the observer's position. His behavior, of observing for example, is invisible for him but (can be) visible for me, while his experience (of observing my visible behavior) is visible for him (in my behavior

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[2] I do not mean to imply a one to one correspondance here between my experience and your behavior for example, or to imply an identity. My experience is your behavior but as behaved by you. The reflection then of my experience in your behavior but also as your behavior is more properly understood as a refraction. Your behavior then not only "registers" my experience, it transforms it. There are important implications here for psychology, but since they are not thematic for this paper I cannot pursue them now.

as behaved by me) but invisible for me. Thus it appears that experience "and" behavior are both visible and invisible, and each in specific ways or in relation to specific points of view. To the perspective of the observer belongs the visibility of the other's behavior and the invisibility of the other's experience, while to the perspective of the actor belongs the visibility of his own experience and the invisibility of his own behavior.

My last statement however, hides a metaphor since it implicitly makes believe that the actor's and the observer's perspectives are in fact spatial positions. In fact however these perspectives are not spatial positions at all, but are on the contrary attitudes toward human action. They are in other words not really places to stand but ways of standing (attitude) and ways of seeing human action. Consequently in addition to the observer's perspective on the other, there is the possibility of an observer's perspective on one's self, just as there is the possibility of an actor's perspective on the other in addition to that perspective on one's self. One can for example take the observer's perspective on himself by imagining his behavior as it is seen by the other, a kind of methodological version of seeing yourself as others see you. And one can also take the actor's perspective on the other by imagining his experience, a kind of methodological version of placing yourself in the other's shoes. Any subject therefore can adopt the perspectives

of the actor and observer interchangeably and with respect to himself as well as the other. But given this freedom it nevertheless remains true that the observer's perspective, whether on oneself or the other, is privileged with respect to the behavioral meaning of human action, just as the actor's perspective is privileged with respect to the meaning of human action as experience. Moreover within each perspective there is the further privilege associated with the focus of the point of view which is adopted. Thus the observer's perspective "on the other" is the privileged perspective for behavior, while the actor's perspective "on himself" is the privileged one for experience. And these are the privileged perspectives because in each one the visibility of human action, either as behavior "or" experience, is at its heightened maximum of clarity. Thus my behavior is most visible for you as the observer, while my experience is most visible for myself as the actor.

What I have been discussing in this section perhaps can best be summarized by saying that human action is neither behavior nor experience, nor even both in some additive way as behavior and experience. These are only convenient ways of speaking the fact that human action is the dialectic behaved-experience, experienced-behavior, and that as such this dialectic possess a depth and is never completely visible or invisible. Experience is the lateral depth of behavior just as behavior

is the lateral[3] depth of experience; or experience is the context of behavior, just as behavior is the context for experience. Between them therefore there is not a relation of cause and effect, or even a relation of the manifest to the latent in any fixed way. On the contrary their relation is one of figure to ground, and like those reversible figure-ground examples of psychology. Hence in the study of human action, the attitudes of observer and actor are respectively ways of enhancing either the figure of behavior or experience, even while it is possible, with a shift in the focus of the attitude, to imagine the ground of each figure. In short, therefore, the maximum visibility of behavior or experience in fact turns out to mean the perception of the figures of human action.

As I indicated these remarks on the visibility of experience

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[3]In using the term lateral depth I intend a specific meaning. Considered from either side of actor or observor one can not say that experience, for example, is within, behind or beneath one's behavior. On the contrary one should say that it is between us in the world. The lateral depth then is in fact a way of expressing the dialectic of transformation between my behavior and your experience for example. There is then no hidden depth of experience within me, but a hidden depth between us in the world. But in addition to these considerations, it is necessary to say that the image of lateral depth between us is not captured by a line but by a spiral. The setting of human action always contains the temporal horizons of past and future, of one's history and expectations, so that the laterality is one of degrees. Husserl's theme of sedimentation and Freud's notion of the unconscious are important in this respect. Readers who wish a more elaborate discussion of this theme, however, are referred to my article, "Phenomenology and Psychoanalysis: Contributions of Merleau-Ponty," Psychoanalytic Review, in press.

were prompted by my initial disagreement with Hart's view concerning nostalgia. Beginning with the position that nostalgia, like any psychological phenomenon, is a setting or a world, and recognizing that a psychological phenomenon in its experience side is visible, I began my study of nostalgia as a visible experience. I wish now to report some of this research in its methods and its results.

(2) The experience of Nostalgia

a. Method

I began my research on the experience of nostalgia by asking my subjects to "create" a situation for nostalgia. I then instructed them to live that situation through, and then to reflect on it and to describe the situation and their experience of that situation.

In asking my subjects to "create" a situation I was taking advantage of the fact that nostalgia is a world and that if one has once already lived it then one already has some pre-understanding of its world. In other words, I was asking my subjects to draw on their previous experience of this phenomenon in order to "re-create" it by "creating" its mood. As I indicated, my own experience had already taught me that the phenomenon of nostalgia always had a certain setting which included among other things its lighting, the time of day, its location

within different parts of a city or my house, and its objects. And since all human experience is a world, I presumed that for each subject it would be possible to re-create the experience by creating its setting. Of course, one obvious drawback to this procedure was my assumption that my subjects had in fact already lived the phenomenon, since without this previous pre-understanding the creation of its setting would not be possible. And yet I found it difficult to believe that any of my subjects, all of whom were junior psychology students with an average age of 21 years, could have survived that long without such an experience. My own experience, as well as the literature on the subject, readily suggested its intrinsic connection with temporality, and Macksey in his introduction to Ralph Harper's study on nostalgia even went so far as to say that "all modern ontologies can be comprehended within the original experience of nostalgia; for authentic being is first certified in its absence, in the anguished experience of separation, the search for that 'other place' of the Phaedo (1966, p. 10)."

But of course, proceeding in this way, I had some rather clear ideas regarding the limits and possibilities of this "creating." I was not suggesting in this procedure that one possessed the phenomenon or could recall it at will. But neither was I accepting Hart's position that it possessed me. On the contrary, I understood the phenomenon to be <u>between</u> me

and the world so that the term "create" meant something like coaxing the world into becoming the setting for nostalgia by preparing it (and oneself), or by setting the stage. I did not see this creation as calling the experience forth, but rather as only an attempt to make the possibility of the experience possible. It was not positing the experience but placing oneself in the occasion of the experience, not unlike when we place ourselves in the occasion or setting of learning for example, in order to learn. For here too we always implicitly take advantage of what we already know of learning as a setting or a world. In this sense, therefore, this procedure merely made use of this everyday experience, hoping thereby to maximize the possibility for the experience. Looked at in this way, moreover, this procedure is not too different from what a traditional psychological experiment is, since here too there is the setting of the stage to maximize the appearance of the phenomenon. The two obvious and crucial differences however are first, that in the present procedure it is the subjects themselves who arrange the setting, and second, it is a setting which is personally meaningful rather than generally meaningful.

To be more specific, this method of creating the setting of the experience involved the three stages of preparation, participation, and reflection-description. But in attempting to describe these stages for my subjects I soon discovered some

problems about research which ultimately influenced the phenomenon studied. I discovered for example that my descriptions of the stages were uneven with some longer on attitudes and shorter on specific procedures than others. For example, in the stage of preparation I said that one sets the situation or prepares a space for the phenomenon like some invited guest to appear. But this attitude of arranging, I indicated, would include specific procedures from choosing a particular place and/or time to arranging the lighting and/or posturing of one's body. In this stage, therefore, the subject would have something to do in accordance with his own particular pre-understanding of the phenomenon's setting. In the second stage of participation, however, there was a distinct absence of procedures. All that I could do was to suggest the attitude appropriate to this stage, an attitude of reception, an unhurried attitude, an attitude of non-anxious expectation like one adopts when he is awaiting his guest after all the arrangements have been made. Clearly in this stage my method was in fact less obvious as a procedure and more obvious as an attitude, and at first I was uneasy about it. This uneasiness moreover was especially exacerbated by demands from my subjects to be more specific, by demands to provide procedures for how one was to be receptive and unhurried. But after a while I realized that one could not go beyond this suggestion of an attitude or posture toward a

phenomenon, and that in suggesting it one was in fact indicating a method. In other words, it occured to me that a method does not equal a procedure, and that in fact even in the natural sciences where the procedural element of method stands out the adoption of an attitude is still part and parcel of that method. As a way or road or path toward a phenomenon, therefore, a method is not only a procedure, like walking on that road, but an attitude in that walking. Hence depending on the phenomenon studied, one's method will at times emphasize procedure or attitude. Yet the two are never dichotomous. Thus even while the attitudinal element was more important in evoking nostalgia in this second stage of the method, the first stage of preparation with its procedures was indispensable. Indeed there could have been no participation without this preparation; there could have been no reception of the experience without having first made oneself ready to receive.

The third stage of my method raised a different sort of problem. Having participated in the experience, I had asked the subjects to recall it, reflect on it and to describe that experience. Indeed, more specifically I had asked them to describe the situation of their experience and their experience of that situation. The former request was rather straightforward and easily understood, with the subjects giving me the details of their present setting. The latter however presented

the problem, for here, as I expected, most subjects initially by-passed or simply did not notice the visibility of their own experience. As I indicated in the previous section we live through experience and thus tend to become forgetful of its meaning as a structure.

The easiest way to present this problem is to discuss it in terms of the difference between the nostaligc experience and the experience of nostalgia. The two are not the same, although they are necessarily related in the sense that one can get to the experience of a phenomenon only through the phenomenon experienced. Stated in other terms, the difference between the nostalgia experience and the experience of nostalgia is a difference between a personal level of meaning and a structural level. Now in all the descriptions the personal level of meaning, <u>the nostalgic experience</u>, is a particular, and often biographical event for which the individual is nostalgic. But what colors that event nostalgically, what makes it into an <u>experience of nostalgia</u> and thus differentiates it from something like a memory or a reverie of that event, is the way in which the subjects are related to that event, the way in which their present experience of nostalgia is related to that past which it nostalgically experienced. And it is at this level that the structural meaning comes through.

Having presented some remarks on this method of "creating the setting for the experience of nostalgia", I want to present some of my results, results which are intrinsically related to this method. But given the intention of this paper to describe something of the process of research with human phenomenon, this presentation must be brief and just enough to give a taste of this rich experience.

(b) Results

Nostalgia is the experience of meeting yourself as a stranger. It is yourself whom you recognize, but in some way also not yourself. Often this sense of being a stranger is expressed by the fact that the one whom you see, yourself, does not face you, so that you see him either from behind or in profile. Moreover, this stranger himself often appears to be looking on some scene from which he himself however is distant. Like a ghost he seems to haunt that scene, vaguely recognizing the things and other people who compose it but himself un-recognized or completely unnoticed by them. But then paradoxically he who is not recognized is you yourself, you who have come back and returned only however to find reflected in the indifference of the others the sense of being estranged. Like a waking dream, then, the experience of nostalgia is the experience of being present but in an absent way, an experience of a distance which

can never be overcome. Between the past which is now present again and this present which one is, there seems to be an invisible barrier which forever bars one's return.

Closely tied up with the experience of being the stranger to oneself is the bittersweet feeling of nostalgia. One recognizes or seems to recognize in this scene all that was and is really of value, and thus all that he has betrayed in leaving it. Indeed in the experience of nostalgia there is very strongly this feeling of betrayal which carries with it a sense of regret. It is not merely that something has been lost for which I can mourn, but rather that I have left something behind which still continues to live but without me. That past, then, which I glimpse in the distance, that past toward which I reach in nostalgia but which always eludes my grasp, that past which preserves a part of me which however I seem no longer to be, faces me with my own indifference and with my own forgetfulness of myself. "Here is 'home'," it seems to whisper "Here is the heritage which you have left." C. S. Lewis very nicely captures the bittersweet feeling of this whisper:

> "Part of the bitterness which mixes with the sweetness of that message is due to the fact that it so seldom seems to be a message intended for us, but rather something we have overheard (Hart, p. 409)."

This past therefore speaks to me but in such a way that it seems to exclude me and even to condemn me for my forgetfulness

of myself. This sense of loss which is really more a sense of betrayal, this sense of distance which one can not seem to overcome, this sense of estrangement from oneself is for many subjects not unlike the imagined experience of dying. But tied up with this notion of the stranger, this sense of dying is something which I seem to watch and observe. It is not I who am really dying but this someone else, this stranger who dies. An indifference seems to work both ways, from the one who returns for the past to which he returns, and from that past for the one who has come back in this way.

But this indifference seems to have a special character, for it depicts not an indifference born of contempt or disregard, but an indifference born of a detachment, as if one recognizes that somehow all of this is necessary and was to be. An element of fate seems to creep in, so that the experience begins to take on another character or a different face. Gradually, almost without notice, one begins to see in this past, in this betrayed heritage, a future, and a fated destiny.

The experience of nostalgia then reveals itself to be a returning which turns back on itself, a movement from the present through the past toward the future, a specific way of living time which has as it were two faces. In addition to this face of betrayal, then, there is this face of fulfillment, insofar as one discovers in the experience something like that the path which one has traveled in life is the path that one must have traveled.

This sense of fate however is not so much a sense of resignation as it is a sense of re-discovering who one really is by re-discovering one's limits and one's possibilities. In a very curious way this face of fulfillment is the recognition that one's life does indeed have a direction to it, and most importantly that the task of one's life has not been to create that direction but to recover it, to recover what was and is already there. In this sense and in this face, the experience of nostalgia is no longer a feeling of bittersweet pain but of a kind of peace, which some subjects variously describe as the death of the feelings of power, control or of being the master of one's ambitions. Interestingly enough this aspect of the experience sheds some light on the difficulties which some subjects had with the second stage of the method, the stage of participation. For if the experience of nostalgia is in one sense the losing of one's life in order to find it, then it would seem to be difficult, if not impossible, to receive that experience while one was busily planning for it. In other words, this aspect seems to indicate that the experience of nostalgia is in one sense the experience of being guided toward one's future rather than achieving it.

Be that as it may, however, this other face of nostalgia, this movement from betrayal to fulfillment, from a failed heritage to a fated destiny, from a sense of dying to one of rebirth, is the dawning recognition and the first real discovery of what possesses you. What one discovers in that past which initially

one seems to have betrayed is that which binds him to his life. It is the recovery of something like the personal or guiding myth of one's life, the experience of returning home or to one's origins, but only in order to begin again. Like Tennyson's "Ulysses", the experience of nostalgia seems to make of every man that restless wanderer in search of "...that untraveled world whose margin fades, Forever and forever when I move. (Abrams, et al, 1974, p1024)." The past time for which one is nostalgic, then, is not in its fullest sense a real time, a real event, but is rather what Hart calls "aeonic time (Ibid, p406)." What in one sense is often a biographical event for the subject is in another and deeper sense "...an age, a time, an aeon, complete in itself (Hart, p407)." Indeed one subject expressed this aspect most clearly in describing a nostalgic time which in fact he had never actually lived, the period 1880-1914 of European history. Perhaps, therefore, it is here more than in any other aspect of the experience, that nostalgia is different from other ways of living the past, for here the individual stands in the presence of a time and a theme which seems to gather together within itself all that he was and all that he is to become. It is in Hart's phrase "the golden age", the intimation of a lost paradise, the hint of a home which we have never had, and can never have, but for which we continue to search. Is the human experience of nostalgia, then, the founding motive of man's

myth making activities, and are these myth making activities the expression of everyman's nostalgic search for that original home?

This all too brief summary presentation of the results concerning the experience of nostalgia is sufficient however to indicate that mostalgia is different from other ways of living time, like reverie and memory. Although Hart erroneously uses nostalgia and reverie interchangeably, the sense of distance from the nostalgic past which characterizes the experience of nostalgia makes it distinct. As Bachelard (1969) has shown the experience of reverie is the experience of being enveloped in the past, whereas the experience of nostalgia is, in the words of one of my subjects, more like the experience of being on a threshold, between two worlds, belonging to each one and to neither one. Furthermore, the experience of reverie is more of a comforting experience and lacks the bittersweet taste so intimate to nostalgia. And finally the experience of nostalgia, unlike that of reverie again, is not a simple return to a past but to a past which in its presence is also the projection of a future.

With regard to memory, nostalgia is again unique, for while the experience of remembering does maintain a tension between an actual present and a possible past which is similar to nostalgia, the latter experience involves an affective relation which I have tried to describe in terms of the faces

of betrayal and fulfillment. The experience of nostalgia, then, unlike that of memory, brings us somewhat closer to the realization that the life of consciousness finds its unique synthesis in "...an affective bond or communication (Hart, p. 404)." And of all the results this is perhaps the most significant, since, in agreement with Hart's article, Husserl's phenomenological analyses of the temporality of consciousness supports this present description of the experience of nostalgia, while this present description extends and deepens this analysis. In other words Husserl's retention-protention structure of consciousness opens onto the deeper, affective structure of conscious life as historical-imaginative, or perhaps even better said mythical-imaginative. Through the experience of nostalgia, then, we discover that the unity of conscious life is not something that we thematically achieve, that the synthesis of conscious life is in Husserl's words a "passive synthesis (1960)," a "synthesis in the making (Hart, p. 405)," a unity that is always lived before it is ever known. In short the experience of nostalgia seems to teach us tnat the synthesis of one's life is as much achieved, and perhaps even more so, by a logic of the heart as by a logic of the mind.

(3) Conclusion

Earlier in my discussion I mentioned that Hart had made a

distinction between being nostalgic and recalling an experience of nostalgia, and that this distinction seemed ill founded. Although this distinction was not the reason for adopting another method for investigating the experience of nostalgia, the use of this other method bears on this distinction. Thus I supplemented my first method of "creating the setting for the experience of nostalgia" with a method which asked the subjects to simply recall a previous experience of nostalgia, and to describe the situation of that experience and their experience of that situation. I did this primarily because of the difficulties which some of my subjects had in attempting to create the setting.

On the basis of this second method, three important results were obtained. First, some of my subjects indicated that for them there was in fact no difference between preparing the setting for the experience and recalling a previous experience of nostalgia. For these subjects it turned out that the stage of preparation in the first method consisted in fact in nothing more than recalling a previous experience. Conversely it also happened that the recalling was for all subjects a kind of preparation. In short, therefore, one can in fact prepare the setting for the experience of nostalgia in many ways, one of which however can be through the method of recalling a previous experience.

Second, given this similarity there was however some minor differences between the two methods. Creating the setting for the experience of nostalgia seemed in general to be a more difficult task than simply recalling a previous experience. However, while it was more difficult for most subjects this first method allowed for a more fresh experience which various subjects described as having more intensity. Curiously enough however, both methods, of creating and recalling, were noticeably different for some subjects from the experience of spontaneously being overtaken by nostalgia. The latter always seemed more overwhelming than either of the other two, and was generally experienced as coming up from behind the subject, like a wave one subject said, rather than being experienced as in front of him.[4] But again, in general, despite these differences the structure of the experience as described appeared to be thematically the same.

Third, and finally, the method of recalling a previous experience of nostalgia indicated that to recall a previous experience of nostalgia was in fact to become nostalgic. In

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[4] Nostalgia spontaneously lived comes up from <u>behind</u>, like a wave, whereas nostalgia as studied (known) is <u>before</u> me or ahead of me. It is interesting to speculate on what this may mean. Freud "located" the lived <u>beneath</u> us in the unconscious, and Descartes "located" the known <u>above</u> us in clear and distinct ideas. It seems the lived and the known have their "place" in the world. But this research seems to say that while they are still polarities, their "places" are in the <u>lateral</u>, rather than the vertical dimension.

other words the recalling was itself already a participation, or the beginnings of it as the recalling slipped from being a preparation into actually becoming nostalgic. Hart's distinction, therefore, appears to be wrong, and this result seems to suggest that to recall an experience is to become infected by it. A sterile clinical distance does not seem to be possible, raising the question then of just how far one can investigate the phenomena of psychology without participating in them in some way. A contamination seems inevitable!

B. The world of a psychological phenomenon: Behavior

The phenomenon of nostalgia, however, is not only a visible experience, it is a visible behavior as well. In my research, therefore, I also had my subjects adopt the observer's perspective on the other in order to describe nostalgia's behavior. Here follows a very brief indication of this method and its results.

(1) The behavior of nostalgia

(a) Method

To observe the behavior of nostalgia is a most difficult task, because quite unlike other phenomena, like learning for example, nostalgia is very <u>personal</u> in its origins. In other words, with a phenomenon like nostalgia, <u>the researcher</u> is not able to provide a setting in which the behavior will most likely occur. One man's nostalgia can be another man's

boredom, so that in effect the one who is to observe the behavior of nostalgia is faced with the task of arranging to be in the presence of one who is experiencing nostalgia. A second difficulty, moreover, which is also related to the personal origins of nostalgia, concerns the question of whether it is even possible for a subject to experience nostalgia in the presence of another, particularily when he knows that other will be observing his behavior. Here the task of observation requires an observer to be present in such a way that he neither inhibits nor intrudes upon this most fragile experience.

Concerning the first difficulty, however, the method of having the subject himself create the setting for the experience or recall a previous experience seemed most suitable. Hence I arranged my subjects into dyads and gave them the following instructions:

> "Let one individual 'create' again the setting for the experience of nostalgia or recall a previous experience. Live through that experience while the other observes your behavior. Then each of you describe the situation from your point of view."

Initially, of course, I was in no way certain that such a procedure would succeed, and in fact as it turned out it did succeed only when the subjects modified the instructions. Neither creating the setting, nor recalling a previous experience was workable, and what all twenty-six subjects discovered was that in the presence of the other it was necessary to begin

Notwithstanding the difficulties involved in this method, twenty-six descriptions of the visible behavior of nostalgia were obtained. A brief presentation of these results now follows.

(b) Results

In general the behavior of nostalgia is described as a kind of withdrawal. The subject who enters a nostalgic experience appears to leave the present, drifting away as it were toward some unseen, from the observer's point of view, horizon. Quite often the observer remarks on the posture of the subject's head, indicating that in his eyes, which focus slightly upward and away, he seems to be looking at something far away. His head moreover at times even seems to take on the attitude of one who is listening to or for something, which however he can not quite hear. In this posture of quiet expectation the subject, as seen by the observer, seems removed from the present and in touch with an experience which shows itself in a kind of a melancholy smile.

'take its moments straight' (1966, p. 141, #18)." Thus to someone who lives in perpetual motion toward the future, and/or to someone who prides himself on being a realist, that is one who can take the moments straight, the experience of nostalgia can be threatening. Indeed, from a clinical and analytic point of view there are some who would reduce nostalgia to depression or melancholy. Now while all of this is extreme, there is nevertheless something of an antithesis between nostalgia and being realistic, and hence something of a danger involved in the experience.

This more passive, quiet and serene countenance of nostalgia is however at times juxtaposed to a more active kind of involvement. Here the observer notices the play of the subject's hands, arms and upper trunk. In one very clear instance for example a subject was describing his father's love of the clarinet and the times when he would listen to his father speak of it and even play it. Here the observer noticed the subject "fingering" the instrument, grasping as it were in the present this unseen link to former times. Moreover, even when this most visible hold on the past was not apparent, many observers described the subject's behaving body as engaged in repetitive movements, like the scratching of the fingers on a piece of cloth, or the touching of one's chin with one's fingers. In short, what the subjects were describing in these instances is what can best be called the rhythmic character of this behavior. To many of the observers in fact it seemed as if a certain rhythm was being established in the present so that the subject could free himself to be in another place.

Despite this very brief presentation of nostalgia's behavior, a brevity which comes out of the descriptions themselves, I wish to conclude this discussion with brief reference to several significant implications.

(c) Conclusion

On the basis of the above description, I think that

one can readily see that first, the descriptions of nostalgia's behavior are in and of themselves ambiguous, and second, that in conjunction with the experience of nostalgia these descriptions are complementary to and supportive of that experience.

Without the benefit of knowing, for example, that the subject was engaged in a nostalgic experience, could the observer, or for that matter a reader of the observer's descriptions, sufficiently distinguish this behavior's meaning from other kinds of behavior like remembering or even thinking? While I did not thoroughly investigate this issue, my subjects' comments do suggest that on the behavioral level alone the differences between the phenomenon of nostalgia and other phenomena like remembering, for example, are insufficient or do not exist at all. But situated within the context of the experience of nostalgia, these behavioral descriptions enrich and deepen one's understanding of the phenomenon.

Furthermore, the rhythmic character of nostalgic behavior strongly suggests the possibility that <u>experience is "properly" the figure of nostalgia while its behavior is its ground.</u> Looked at in a more general way, this suggestion may even indicate that there are some psychological phenomena which are <u>best</u> studied from the experience side. What immediately comes to mind here as another example are the phenomena of human emotions. Here it

seems the behavioral data again are insufficiently distinct to distinguish many of the emotions, whether that data be collected at the physiological level or even at the more molar level of the environment. Does behavior alone for example readily reveal the difference in meaning between anxiety and fear? Much however can be gained about their respective meanings and their differences when the experienced world of each of these emotions is described. W. Fischer's book on Theories of Anxiety (1970), nicely illustrates this theme. Thus it may be that some psychological phenomena more readily call for an experiential description than others, even while the study of all psychological phenomena can benefit from these descriptions.

Finally, perhaps the most significant implication of investigating the behavior of nostalgia is the recognition that the body of human action is not merely the body of behavior but the body of experience as well. The behaving body sustains the experience of nostalgia, just as the experience of nostalgia is embodied. In this regard, research on the behavior of nostalgia indicates that the human body is the crossing of behavior "and" experience, and that behavior "and" experience are a dialectic where the relation is one of mutual reciprocity and depth, rather than of cause to effect or of the inside to the outside. But even while there is this crossing, even while the human body is both the body of behavior "and" experience, this research

also indicates that there are certain "preferences." Thus, within the context of this "doubling", it would nevertheless seem correct to speak of the body of behavior "and" the world of experience, and to understand these terms as previously discussed. In this regard, then, one can say that behavior is to experience, as the body is to the world.

C. The world of the psychological phenomenon: Expression

The phenomenon of nostalgia is not only the behavior "and/or" experience of nostalgia, but its expression as well. However, since I did not explicitly study this aspect of nostalgia, I can indicate only what I think its investigation would involve based on the differences between behavior and expression.

First, the term expression has a specific meaning and refers to a dimension of human action in contrast with behavior. Stated in other terms, just as behavior "and" experience refer to two different stances toward the meaning of human action, behavior "and" expression also refer to two different stances toward the issue of human action in its relation to the norms of body, situation and history. Behavior then is that term which indicates that human action is embodied, situated and historical, and from this perspective one studies human action by investigating its embodied, situated and historical conditions. From this perspective of behavior, then, human action is understood to be guaranteed by these norms, and one achieves an understanding

of a specific action by situating it within the context of any or all of these norms. Thus for example one can undertake the study of nostalgia by investigating the bodily conditions of its occurrence, and either as I did via the visible bodily manifestations of nostalgia which are more or less culturally bound, or via its physiology. Or one can in fact undertake a more sociological investigation and study the situations of nostalgia. Or finally one can also study the phenomenon of nostalgia by concentrating on the history of the nostalgic individual. Miller (1956), for example, has done just this in his psychoanalytic study of Marcel Proust.

But even while it is obvious and true that all human action is embodied, situated and historical in this way, and thus can be studied in this fashion, it is also true, but perhaps less obvious, that human action is only relatively guaranteed by these norms. At the other end of the spectrum, then, there is a certain distance of human action from its norms, and expression is the term used to indicate this distance.[6] Further, within this distance expression is also the possibility of taking up these norms in a new way for the very task of expression itself. Thus from this perspective of expression, one can not understand

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[6]Readers who want a more extensive treatment of this issue of behavior and expression, as well as an indication of its roots in the work of Merleau-Ponty, are referred to in my article, "Metaphors and human behavior," Journal of Phenomenological Psychology, Vol. 5, No. 2, Fall, 1975.

the meaning of a human action without some understanding of the actor's intention. A knowledge of the norms of a particular action then is not enough.

Concerning the phenomenon of nostalgia, now, a study of it as expression would obviously require an investigation of those individuals who either intend to create a work of nostalgia or who have already done so. Such a study of course would not dispense with the embodied, situated and historical conditions of this action, but would on the contrary approach these conditions in another way. But however this study would in practice be carried out, it seems to me that this study, or any study on the expression of nostalgia would have as one of its guiding themes a concern for what "motivates" the turn toward nostalgia. In this sense, moreover, one perhaps would find the relation between nostalgia and man's myth making activities which I alluded to previously.

III. Conclusion

In this paper I have tried to show one way in which research with human phenomena can be conducted. This way includes investigating a phenomenon from the behavioral, experiential and expressive points of view. Each of these perspectives were described, and the visibility of human experience was indicated. The specific context of these remarks was the phenomenon of nostalgia.

The experience of nostalgia reveals itself in the faces of betrayal and fulfillment, while the behavior of nostalgia lends support or is the ground for this experience. Concerning the research methods, it seems that the following suggestion is in order: behavior gives us the normative meanings of a phenomenon, expression gives us the intentional meanings, and experience gives us the structural meanings.

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